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equity

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equity noun

eq·ui·ty ˈe-kwə-tē

plural **equities**

[Synonyms of equity](#) >

- 1

a

: fairness or justice in the way people are treated

often, specifically : freedom from [disparities](#) in the way people of different races, genders, etc. are treated

... salaries in North America have long been considered a private matter between employer and employee. ... But a growing number of advocates say that needs to change, in part to address problems of gender and racial *equity*, but also to keep talented employees in the workforce.

— Amanda Stephenson

The fact that more money is spent on white Americans than those who identify as Black, Asian or Hispanic shouldn't come as a shock given a growing body of research around health *equity*.

— Katie Jennings
- b

: something that is [equitable](#)

social *equities* and inequities

2

a

: the money value of a property or of an interest in a property in excess of claims or liens against it

b

: the common stock of a corporation

c

: a risk interest or ownership right in property

d

: a right, claim, or interest existing or valid in equity

3

a


: a system of law originating in the English chancery and comprising a settled and formal body of legal and procedural rules and doctrines that supplement, aid, or override common and statute law and are designed to protect rights and enforce duties fixed by substantive law

b

: trial or remedial justice under or by the rules and doctrines of equity


c

: a body of legal doctrines and rules developed to enlarge, supplement, or override a narrow rigid system of law



Did you know?

Equity usually appears in courts of law as a term related to justice or proportional fairness, or in financial offices to property or one's share of a company. The derivative root of the noun, which gained stability in the English language during the 1300s, is Latin *aequus*, meaning "even," "fair," or "equal"; however, to be fair, it was introduced to English by the French, whose adaptation of the Latin was *équité*. The French word has clear legal connotations; it means "justice" or "rightness," and those meanings, plus a splash of "fairness," carried over to the English word *equity*. Noah Webster, himself a lawyer, notes the legal term [equity of redemption](#) in his [1828 dictionary](#) defining it as "the advantage, allowed to a mortgager, of a reasonable time to redeem lands mortgaged, when the estate is of greater value than the sum for which it was mortgaged." This use led to the modern financial meanings of *equity*: "the value of a piece of property after any debts that remain to be paid are subtracted" and "a share in a company or of a company's stock."



Synonyms

detachment

disinterestedness

fair-mindedness

impartiality

neutralism

nonpartisanship

disinterest

evenhandedness

fairness

justice

neutrality

objectiveness



Definition

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Examples of *equity* in a Sentence

- In making these decisions we should be governed by the principle of **equity**.
- We've been slowly paying off our mortgage and building up **equity** in our house.

Recent Examples on the Web

Examples are automatically compiled from online sources to show current usage. [Read More](#)

- Telemedicine providers, hospitals, health care systems, public health agencies, physician groups and policymakers all must actively pursue the goal of expanding care through pay **equity**.
— Jason Povia, *Forbes*, 13 Mar. 2025
- Some commentators say that any economic downturn will be brief, and that falling stocks are merely reflecting a lower appetite for riskier assets like **equities** in tech firms, which have seen the biggest draw-downs, and cryptocurrencies, which have also taken heavy losses.
— Rob Wile, *NBC News*, 13 Mar. 2025
- Last year's work plan, meanwhile, featured a section on **equity** in underserved communities.
— Sammy Roth, *Los Angeles Times*, 13 Mar. 2025
- The transaction converted debt into **equity** for major creditors.
— Leslie Josephs, *CNBC*, 13 Mar. 2025

[See All Example Sentences for equity >](#)

Word History

Etymology

Middle English *equite*, from Anglo-French *equité*, from Latin *aequitat-*, *aequitas*, from *aequus* equal, fair

First Known Use

14th century, in the meaning defined at [sense 1a](#)

Time Traveler

The first known use of **equity** was in the 14th century
[See more words from the same century](#)


Phrases Containing *equity*

- [diversity, equity, and inclusion](#)
- [equity capital](#)
- [home equity loan](#)
- [negative equity](#)
- [sweat equity](#)


Rhymes for *equity*

[inequity](#)

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Kids Definition

equity noun

eq·ui·ty 

plural equities

1 : fairness or justice in dealings between persons

2 : a system of law that is a more flexible addition to ordinary common and statute law and is designed to protect rights and achieve just settlements in cases where ordinary legal settlements may be too strict

https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/equity

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**Definition**

Did you know?

[Synonyms](#)[Example Sentences](#)[Word History](#)[Phrases Containing](#)[Rhymes](#)[Entries Near](#)[Related Articles](#)[Podcast](#)[Show More](#) **Legal Definition****equity** *noun*eq·ui·ty (*'e-kwə-tē*)**plural** **equities**

- 1 a** : justice according to fairness especially as distinguished from mechanical application of rules
 | prompted by considerations of *equity*
 | comity between nations, and *equity* require it to be paid for
 — F. A. Magruder
- b** : something that is equitable : an instance of equity
 | the inequities produced by the system are outnumbered by the *equities*
- 2 a** : a system of law originating in the English chancery and comprising a settled and formal body of substantive and procedural rules and doctrines that supplement, aid, or override common and statutory law
 | the judicial power shall extend to all cases, in law and *equity*, arising under this Constitution
 — *U.S. Constitution* art. III
- see also [CHANCERY](#)
- compare [COMMON LAW](#), [LAW](#)
- NOTE: The courts of equity arose in England from a need to provide relief for claims that did not conform to the writ system existing in the courts of law. Originally, the courts of equity exercised great discretion in fashioning remedies. Over time, they established precedents, rules, and doctrines of their own that were distinct from those used in the courts of law. Although for a time the courts of equity rivaled the law courts in power, the law courts maintained an advantage partly as a result of forcing the equity courts to hear only those cases for which there was no adequate remedy at law. The courts of law and equity were united in England in 1873. Courts of equity also developed in the United States, but in most states and in the federal system courts of law and courts of equity have been joined. The courts apply both legal and equitable principles and offer both legal and equitable relief, although generally equitable relief is still granted when there is no adequate remedy at law.
- b** : the principles that developed in the courts of equity : justice in accordance with equity
 | *equity* treats a devisee who procures a will by fraud as a constructive trustee
 — W. M. McGovern, Jr. *et al.*
- also* : justice in accordance with natural law
- c** : a court of equity
 | sat alone for some time in *equity*
 — O. W. Holmes, Jr.
- 3** : a body of doctrines and rules developed to enlarge, supplement, or override any narrow or rigid system of law
- 4 a** : a right, claim, or interest existing or valid in equity
- b** : the money value of a property or of an interest in property in excess of any claims or liens (as mortgage indebtedness) against it
- c** : a risk interest or ownership right in property
specifically : the ownership interests of shareholders in a company
- d** : the common stock of a corporation
 → compare [ASSET](#), [DEBT](#)

EtymologyLatin *aequitat-, aequitas* fairness, justice, from *aequus* equal, fair**More from Merriam-Webster on *equity***Nglsh: [Translation of *equity* for Spanish Speakers](#)Britannica.com: [Encyclopedia article about *equity*](#)



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See All 

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